E
666
J42

E666
.J42

UNION LEAGUE CLUB OF NEW YORK.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT.

JUNE 23, 1866.

Class E666

Book .J42

127

297
874

UNION LEAGUE CLUB OF NEW YORK.

John Jay

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT.

JUNE 23, 1866.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1883
CITY OF WASHINGTON.

E666
.J42

Gentlemen of the Union League Club,

When I acknowledged from Naples the notification of my election as President, I proposed to address you at an early day in reference to the pending national issues in which the country is so deeply interested, and in regard to which our countrymen in Europe are neither unobservant nor indifferent. The fast-changing issues, however, reminded me that it would be more than superfluous to attempt advice in detail from such a distance, to a body thoroughly conversant with the whole subject, and accustomed not simply to judge wisely, but when the occasion demands it, to act promptly.

With this apology for my past silence, and the renewed expression of my regret at my prolonged absence from the post with which you have honored me, I beg leave to offer a few thoughts, not so much upon specific questions immediately before the country, whose aspect may change from week to week, as upon the political situation generally, and the ends which I think should be kept in view in our efforts to give tone and scope to the national policy.

If the distance and the contrasts afforded by an European standpoint are not unfavorable to a complete view of our continental Republic, its past history, its present position, and its future relation to the peoples and the Governments of the world, they are not equally

favorable to accuracy of detail: and should I at all misread recent events, you will remember that with what has occurred since my departure I am less familiar than yourselves.

THE PAST HISTORY OF THE CLUB.

The illustrious part borne by the Club throughout the war, justifies the country in expecting them to assist in solving the problem that the war has left us, especially at a moment when the Legislative and Executive branches seem unable to agree, and the Government is in consequence disjointed in its action and divided in its influence. It is not forgotten that in advance of the organization of the Club the country was in great part indebted to its founders, representing conspicuously the culture, intelligence, and generous wealth of New York, for the pluck that nerved the Cabinet of Mr. Lincoln, and supplied the money and the credit that enabled him to maintain the national honor, in spite of rebel thefts and an empty Treasury.

The country was again indebted to them for that magnificent gathering in Union place, which promptly accepted the challenge of war given at Sumter, and which pledged New York, upon whose sympathy and aid the traitors had confidently relied, to the cause of the Constitution and the Union.

The voice of our loyal citizens then solemnly uttered was re-echoed throughout the land, and from that hour the suppression of the rebellion, however difficult a task, was to the intelligent observer a foregone conclusion.

Months passed, and encouraged by the doubting and

dilatory policy that unhappily prevailed at Washington, and the seeming disposition on the part of the Government to conciliate the rebels by excepting slavery from the rules of war, treason again grew defiant in our midst, and the Union League Club was organized to subdue it. Grappling with the spirit of disloyalty that vaunted itself in our streets as insolently as at Richmond, that sought in every way to hamper and overawe the Government and to encourage the rebels and their foreign abettors, we drove that treason from our public marts and churches and drawing-rooms to its secret haunts, and we replaced it with a healthful sentiment that radiated from our city and reinspired the country with loyalty to the Government, devotion to the flag, and undying faith in the Republic.

In this work we were soon assisted by loyal clergymen who defiantly flung from their steeples their country's banner and denounced the Rebellion from their pulpits as a crime against God and man ; and presently the rebels in New York were astonished to find the stars and stripes waving over an hundred churches, and allegiance to the Constitution enjoined solemnly as a Christian duty.

Then followed in the action of the Club practical aid—of far less importance, it is true, but still worth remembering—in the raising of thousands of volunteers : three regiments of colored troops, and more for Hancock's Corps, when you partially reawakened the patriotism of Tammany Hall ; and also in the untold amounts of money which flowed like water at each new emergency of the war and at every demand of the

Sanitary Commission. But the grand service performed by the Club was their moral and social influence, purifying the Northern atmosphere, inspiring everywhere love of country, hope, and confidence, and animating our brave soldiers and sailors with the thought that while they fought a desperate foe at the front, we were guarding them from a more insidious enemy in the rear.

I need not remind you, for these are among our choicest memories, how cordially our aid was appreciated by the gallant officers of our Army and Navy, whom we have welcomed at our rooms, and by the battle-thinned regiments, whom we have greeted on their return; nor how constantly the advice and assistance of our more experienced members was sought by the Executive, by Congress, and in every department of the Governmental service.

The conduct of the Club during the war has passed into history, and will form no unimportant chapter in the story of the Rebellion. I refer to it now, not as claiming for the members of the Club or for the loyal population of our city whom they represent, any extraordinary patriotism—for the same sleepless devotion animated hundreds of thousands throughout our land; and in the history of the world there is no record of a contest which from beginning to end was so entirely carried on by the people themselves, supplying to the conscientious Executive, who confessedly awaited their will, the needed energy of purpose, and the requisite material of war.

I allude to the past simply as illustrating the present position of the Club, its responsibilities and duties.

That it has grown to be a political power, whose influence is widely felt and deeply feared, is on all sides admitted: and here perhaps courtesy demands the recognition of the establishment of an avowedly opposition Club, as a frank and significant tribute to our influence.

To the national character of the Union League Club and the breadth of its organization, embracing men of different political opinions, who, having reflected honor upon antagonistic parties, united in defence of the country, was added the combination of circumstances which enabled the Club to render such extraordinary service to the country in making New York—which in January, 1861, it was officially proposed by the then Mayor, should secede both from the Union and the State—the chief support of the Government; and these might have sufficiently accounted for the influence of the Club, so distasteful to the faction whose designs we had defeated. But beyond these claims to regard, the Club has inspired confidence and compelled respect by its independency of political dictation, and its superiority to the narrow claims of ambitious partisans; by the frankness and firmness of its discussions of the conduct of the Administration and the policy of its leaders, and, above all, by its unvarying adherence to the broad principles of the national Constitution and of national justice.

These are the features that have enabled the Club to speak for so great a multitude of the loyal citizens of New York, and never was there a city whose warning voice, when the Republic is in danger, commands a larger or more attentive audience.

THE NATIONAL PROMINENCE OF NEW YORK.

Relieved by its easy pre-eminence in all the elements of metropolitan greatness from even the suspicion of envy of its sister cities, New York is universally recognized as the commercial centre of the continent, interested in the prosperity of its remotest parts ; and the fast growing centre also of science, art, and letters, which are henceforth to be numbered among the crowning glories of our free Republic. It is also worthy of note, that the feeling of national and individual pride with which our fellow-citizens from every quarter tread our streets and feel themselves at home, is strengthened by the thought that our Revolutionary history and colonial annals, from the settlement of New Amsterdam by the Dutch, the English, and the Huguenots, with their broad views of political freedom and religious toleration, were the fitting antecedents of a city which, excepting only the disloyal element which you so notably hold in check, has nothing narrow or provincial in its character.

Thus it has come to pass that, instead of representing simply the interest of a state, or the views of a section, New York, the acknowledged metropolis of the Republic, represents the largest interests, the grandest characteristics, and, excepting the anti-national sympa-

thies of a class, the truest principles of the American people.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT.

Passing from these introductory remarks on the position of the Union League Club as an exponent of the loyal sentiment of our city, allow me, gentlemen, to offer you my heartiest congratulations upon the constitutional passage of the "Civil Rights Act," which I observed with pleasure you had assisted by your influence, and had saluted on its enactment with one hundred guns as the last great victory in the war against slavery. While I think that the Supreme Court would have decided, whenever the question should have come before them, that the Amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery made the freed slaves citizens *ipso facto* without the aid of Congressional legislation, I still deem the Civil Rights Act the proper complement to the Anti-Slavery Amendment, since it removes all misapprehension as to the position which the American Republic is henceforth to occupy before the world, as regards the relations of its people towards each other. It is an interesting and encouraging fact, that the great principle of this bill had been already recommended by Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, the late Vice-President of the Rebel Confederacy, in his speech before the Legislature of Georgia, on the 23d of February, as one that should from the first inspire the legislation of the Southern States, so that ample and full protection should be secured to the freedmen "that they may start" (I quote his own words) "equal before the law in the

possession and enjoyment of all rights of personal liberty and property."

There is now an end not simply of the economic dogma attributed to a recent Democratic candidate for the Vice-Presidency, Mr. Herchell V. Johnson, that "capital should own its laborers," but of the doctrine so long practically taught even from the pulpit and the bench, that black men have no rights that white men are bound to regard. The Civil Rights Act, placing the former master and the freedman on an equal footing before the law, overthrows that system of aristocracy, which, commencing with the oppression of helpless blacks, resulted in the degradation of the laboring whites.

After a national existence of ninety years passed in the violation of rights which we ourselves had proclaimed sacred, chastised and humbled, we return to the truth to which we pledged ourselves when we took our place in the family of nations. We have renounced before the law Slavery and Caste ; we have repudiated, in determining the personal rights of citizens, aristocracy of color and classification of race ; we stand upon the simple doctrine of our fathers, that all men are born with an equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Our countrymen have learned late and slowly, but they have learned sadly and surely, that with this sign only, can they maintain the unity, freedom, and honor of our Republic.

In contempt of that foundation principle of the Government, the Democratic party, swayed by slavery, had promulgated the doctrine that the chains of the slave

were the bonds of the Union. So stubbornly had this idea perverted the national judgment, that when, after meditating the assault for a quarter a century, slavery threw off its cloak of devotion to the Union and assaulted the Government in open rebellion, even the Republican administration of Mr. Lincoln hesitated to recognize in slavery the nation's foe, and evinced a readiness to court and cherish it as before.

DISASTROUS RESULTS OF OUR PRO-SLAVERY POLICY IN EUROPE AND AT HOME.

On the 22d of April, 1861, after Sumter had fallen and loyal blood had been shed at Baltimore, the Government assured our Minister to France that "the rev-"olution was without a cause, without a pretext, and "without an object, and that the condition of slavery in "the several States would remain just the same whether "it should succeed or fail." From that fatal policy so blindly adopted and so boldly announced, without contradiction or rebuke from the Congressional committees on foreign relations for many months, came the larger share of all our troubles. France and England, acting in concert, and with no friendly motives, instantly perceived the effect of our admission that the Rebellion was not in the interest of slavery, and our assurance that the war of the Union would not be allowed to become a war of emancipation. They saw that we had voluntarily confirmed the repeated but hardly credited declarations of the rebels that we were as pro-slavery as themselves. They saw that we had furnished ample justification for the delusive theory which they hastened to

adopt, that the war involved no question of slavery, immediate or remote; but was simply a struggle for empire on the one hand, and independence on the other—a struggle in which the sympathies of the world might properly be given to the weaker party gallantly contesting against odds. They recognized the fact that we had enunciated a policy that must strengthen the rebel cause, and perplex and alienate the liberals of Europe; that would put to silence and confusion our anti-slavery friends, and enable the European governments to pursue what course they liked, without interference from that instinctive popular sentiment whether in Great Britain or on the Continent, which they well knew would not tolerate European interference to assist even indirectly in a war of slavery against freedom.

The enunciation of a pro-slavery policy from Washington was responded to within four weeks by the Powers of Europe, with that insidious policy—in which Russia alone, to her immortal honor, refused to acquiesce—which by encouraging and promoting the Rebellion cost us hundreds of thousands of lives and thousands of millions of money.

It was adopted in Great Britain in violation of the understanding of Mr. Dallas that Lord John Russell would await the arrival of Mr. Adams and the explanation he would bring of Mr. Lincoln's intentions; and even the ability of that eminent diplomatist, worthy of his father and of his grandfather, was unable to save us from the consequences of our blunder.

In May, France and England, acting in concert, opened on us simultaneously with their proclamations

of belligerency and neutrality, in favor of belligerents without a fleet or a port; but English ship-yards furnished the one, and English colonies supplied the other, and then came the pirates, who, amid the plaudits of our foreign foes, dispensed with prize courts and substituted the torch, and swept our commerce from the seas.

At home a like disastrous fate attended our ill-starred efforts to war at once for freedom and slavery, and to establish our own liberties by riveting the fetters of the slave.

The Army order, embodying the policy we had proclaimed to Europe, and violating the first rules of war, which, as we entered the enemy's country, drove from our camp the loyal slaves who came to aid us, and the other orders that turned our officers into slave-catchers, and threatened with "the iron hand" the blacks whose assistance we were soon to crave, were followed by defeats and disasters which bowed the nation in shame and sorrow.

HAPPY RESULTS FROM A POLICY OF JUSTICE.

When after many weary months, and a sad waste of life and treasure in a vain attempt to escape the issue, our cautious but honest President yielded at last to the absolute necessity of the case and the peremptory demand of the people, and boldly struck at slavery, the European world recognized the truth which should have been told to them from the start, that as the rebellion was the work of slavery, the war waged for the Constitution and the Union, to be waged successfully, must become a war for freedom.

The Proclamation of Emancipation, as our Ministers abroad promptly assured us, instantly opened the eyes and touched the liberal heart of Europe. Its people saw that we were fighting their battles—the battle of human rights against the usurpations of a class aristocracy, and from that hour no Government of Europe, however hostile to us, nor any number of such Governments combined, would have dared to brave the moral sentiment of their own people and of the Christian world by intervening in furtherance of a war for slavery. We learned too late that in denying the simple fact that slavery was the cause and object of the Rebellion, and in presumptuously announcing that slavery should continue just the same whether we succeeded or failed, we had played into the hands of our enemies at home, and had enabled our foreign foes to heap upon us insult and wrong and to prolong and intensify the struggle.

With the adoption of the policy of justice forced upon the Government by the people, the God of justice smiled upon our cause, the slaves rallied in defence of their country's flag, and that flag advanced by land and sea, until was accomplished a triumph such as the world had never seen before, and at which it has not yet ceased to wonder.

To that triumph, signally postponed until we had inaugurated emancipation as a matter of military necessity, and at the same time of humanity and of right, may be applied with equal truth the solemn reminder of Madison at the close of the war of our Revolution, embodied in the address of the Continental Congress: "Let it ever be remembered that the rights for

"which we have contended were the rights of human nature."

It seems impossible to mistake the lesson taught us by the war at every step, in its inception, its progress, and its close. It is that we cannot trample with impunity on the rights of the blacks, and plead color or race as an apology for the crime; but that our mutual rights and liberties and interests, however widely separated in appearance, are in reality so identified by the Ruler of nations, that if we would enjoy the blessings of a Free Government we must accord these blessings equally to them.

This is undoubtedly the deep conviction of the loyal part of the American people, whose sleepless energy and undying patriotism maintained the war, in spite of obstacles and blunders, and the blood of whose sons and brothers has been shed on the battle-fields of our country, that henceforth the prosperity of America can consist only with justice.

I have observed without concern an intimation from the so called Democratic press, that the Civil Rights Act would not be regarded by the President as law, because it had previously met his disapproval. The suggestion, while worthy of its source, is, I am persuaded, most unjust to the President, who, however decided in being guided by his own convictions, and in maintaining the rights of the Executive Department, will be doubtless equally conscientious in recognizing the powers of Congress and obeying the requirements of the Constitution.

THE EFFECT OF THE AMENDMENT ON LEGISLATION FOR A "SLAVE CLASS."

A late judicial decision in the South against the constitutionality of the Civil Rights Law, must presently bring the case before the Supreme Court for final adjudication; and then we may hope for an authoritative exposition of the changes wrought by the Amendment to the Constitution, and by the Congressional legislation appropriate thereto, upon the national policy and the rights of citizens; and perhaps also upon some of the antiquated State laws that imposed disabilties and penalties not for crime, but for race and complexion.

A class of judicial questions growing out of slavery and its incidents, which had been finally settled, as was supposed, under the Constitution as it was, would seem to be disturbed, if not re-opened by the Constitutional amendment, that has substituted freedom for slavery as the premise of the argument by which their validity was formerly established.

It may possibly be that the identical course of inductive reasoning, which, starting from the view of the late Chief Justice that the framers of the Constitution of 1789 regarded the blacks as having no rights whatsoever, served to establish upon that basis, by the severest logic, the rights of the States to disfranchise, outlaw, degrade, and insult what Mr. Taney called "the slave races," a class thus uncared for and unprotected by the Constitution, may lead to a different conclusion when the judges commence with the new fact, that the American people in their sovereign capacity have constituted, ordained, and established that the members of

the race thus disfranchised shall be equally entitled with themselves to the inalienable rights of American citizens.

That distinguished Democrat, the late John C. Spencer, once said in our State Legislature, of the Declaration of Independence: "That first act of our nation being a solemn recognition of the liberty and equality of all men * * * * * * was the corner-stone of your Confederacy, and is above all constitutions and all laws." The course of judicial decision that culminated in the recognition of slavery as a national institution, to such an extent that Mr. Buchanan assumed that Kansas was as much a slave State as South Carolina, diverted attention from the fact so plainly declared by Mr. Spencer. But now, taking together the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution, we can all see, in the words of President Johnson, that "our Govern-"ment is a grand and lofty structure, and in searching "for its foundation we find that it rests on the broad "basis of popular right."

THE DISAGREEMENT AT WASHINGTON.

The pending disagreement between Congress and the Executive, and the warm discussions to which it has given rise, have excited among our loyal countrymen abroad profound regret, and perhaps some doubt whether by a wiser tact, a mutual deference, and a more graceful courtesy, this most unfortunate antagonism might not have been lessened or avoided; but until recently it has caused them no great alarm, as endangering

the harmony of the Government or the destiny of the country.

They have made a generous allowance for the honest differences of opinion developed in the discussion on the Constitutional and other questions involved in the problem of reconstruction; differences so wide and deep, among many who, educated in opposite schools, have stood shoulder to shoulder in the war, as to recall forcibly the remark of Dr. Franklin, that "the invisible chains of habit are scarcely heavy enough to be "felt until they are too strong to be broken."

They have at the same time regarded it as next to impossible that the rupture should become positive and permanent: first, from their confidence that the patriotism and right feeling of the President and of Congress, so conspicuously exhibited in the past, would induce on their part an united effort at harmonious action in reference to the points at issue; and next, from their conviction that the American people would not quietly acquiesce in a prolonged antagonism, partly political, but withal strangely personal, between their Executive and Congressional servants, at a time when national issues of pressing importance demand their earnest and cordial co-operation.

EUROPEAN INTEREST IN OUR DIVISION.

Our European foes are watching the wranglings in our Union ranks with an interest similar to that which they exhibited in the progress of the war. Whatever threatens a permanent division in the Union party, or indicates to their hopes the reinstatement in power of

the disloyal Democracy of the North and the unrepentant rebels of the South, is hailed by our Continental opponents with a pleasure that they care not to conceal. When occasionally the comments of the European press, most unjust and unfriendly during the war, are marked by an apparent disinterestedness well calculated to deceive the careless reader, it is well to remember the hostile stand-point from which they view the subject, and to read their advice by the light of the fact, that their dislike of the American Republic is as inevitable in the future as it was irrepressible in the past. Our divisions are represented as indicating not simply a defect in the machinery of our Government, but an inherent weakness in our national Union, which for the present at least may justify foreign powers in doubting our readiness to test the loyalty of the South in the chances of a foreign war. This idea may naturally embolden the European powers who have been balked in their hopes of our dissolution to treat with indifference and contempt our just demands, or to exhibit towards our traditional disapproval of their intermeddling with our immediate neighbors, no further respect than may seem to be paid by the convenient assurances and diplomatic promises with which we have been blinded and beguiled.

Renegade Americans are not wanting who ply their trade of foreign intrigue, and I have chanced to meet with a pamphlet that curiously indicates the ingenious hate of a disappointed traitor, and may serve to remind us that henceforth we must be prepared to encounter a foreign hostility aided and abetted by the intelligence of our own disloyal countrymen.

The writer, under the significant signature of "Index," proposes to the Congress that had been expected to meet in Paris, that they may peaceably settle the impending European question by recompensing Austria for the loss of Venetia on the one hand and of Holstein on the other, by a permanent European guarantee to the House of Hapsburg of—Mexico!

This novel proposition is urged upon the ground that it will be the only way to check the progress of the United States, and to prevent them in connection with Russia, whom the writer denounces for her sympathy with us in the war with slavery, from monopolizing and dividing the Oriental trade of the Pacific Ocean, which the Czar, "once firmly seated in his Eastern saddle," can convert presently into "a mere Russian lake."

To arouse the alarm of Europe at the dangers to be apprehended from our lawless ambition, the writer remarks:

"Just before the American war began, Secretary "Seward said, in his great speech at St. Paul, that "the destiny of the United States was to absorb all "the British possessions in North America, and that, "with its capital removed from Washington to the "Halls of the Montezumas, the Great Republic would "one day appropriate all the South American States, "even unto Terra del Fuego," &c., and after this assertion he refers to a recent proposition in Congress to change the name of the United States to America.

The responsibility that attaches to the utterances of European statesmen, and gives such weight to every word that falls from those who sway the destinies of

Europe, naturally disposes Europeans to attach some degree of importance to the language used by Americans in developing the foreign policy of our Republic.

With slavery has been extinguished the spirit that warred upon Mexico, and in the Ostend Manifesto threatened Spain with the loss of Cuba; and the present policy of our country is emphatically one of peace and non-intervention, forming a striking contrast in this respect with the conduct of France towards Mexico, of Spain towards Chili, of Austria and Prussia towards Denmark, and generally with the behavior towards each other of the various members of the happy family of Europe.

As the American people are fully occupied with their own concerns, and entertain no thought of aggression and no design of annexation—no wish, in European phrase, to revise the map and rectify the boundaries of America—it may be wise in our prominent orators, representing either the Government or the people, to avoid language that shall seem to indicate an insatiate policy of indefinite absorption, and which may sometime be used more effectually than at present, in invoking against us an European coalition. A recent writer in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, M. Michel Chevalier, gives warning that in thirty years America will be a match for the whole of Europe, remarking that among the virtues of the great Republic, modesty and reserve are not conspicuous, and that we are apt to affect towards the Old World an attitude of provocation and disdain. He refers to the tone of our late peremptory despatch to Austria forbidding the depart-

ure of volunteers for Mexico, and recommends the European Powers not to divide and waste their forces, but to adopt a concert of organization with reference to the future.

Deeming wise the maxim that enjoins a due regard to the policy of an opponent, I have listened, not without interest, to the views taken of our political situation by some of the rebel sympathizers among our countrymen in Europe, expressed perhaps with less reserve than is occasionally exhibited at home.

VIEW OF THE SITUATION BY REBEL SYMPATHIZERS IN EUPROPE.

Frankly admitting that the people of the South were prepared when they laid down their arms, to acquiesce without question in whatever conditions the national authority might have imposed, precisely as they acquiesced in the several recommendations of the President, which under the circumstances had the sanction of power—declaring void their ordinances of secession, repudiating their own debt, and abolishing slavery—they were nevertheless now resolved to insist that the former constitutional rights of the States were unimpaired by the war, and had revived at its close in undiminished vigor the moment they laid down their arms and submitted to the Government.

The recommendations or mandates of the President, especially that requiring them to adopt the Constitutional Amendment, which struck at the foundation of their social and political system, and swept away rights carefully guaranteed by their State Constitutions, they now hold to have been an act of executive usurpa-

tion, without any authority in the Federal Constitution, and justly entitling them to compensation.

It was acceded to, they say, simply from necessity, and for the reason that slavery was already shattered by the proclamation of Mr. Lincoln.

They profess to regard the President's recent course and language as an abandonment of the theory on which he originally dictated conditions, and as an admission that the national Government had no right to interfere in any manner with the State Constitutions.

They do not propose to forgive the President for his desertion from the Democratic party at the commencement or during the progress of the war, nor for his conduct as President in abolishing slavery and revolutionizing the Southern Constitutions. It is the rule of their party never to forgive, and never to trust again one who has deserted or betrayed them; but they will sustain his administration with apparent cordiality so long as he neutralizes the power of Congress. The division in the Government they will, of course, assist as far as possible; they are charmed with the quarrel as it stands, and indulge the hope that the spirit exhibited on both sides by the Republican leaders will soon render the breach irreparable and their own triumph certain.

They regard their position as vastly improved by what they call the blunders of the Republicans since the close of the war.

Then they occupied the position of a party not simply defeated, but in disgrace alike with the national Government, which they had opposed, and with the rebels,

whom they had lured into the war and had then deserted ; whereas now they are able to claim credit as loyal supporters of the Administration, and the most earnest in their demands for the restoration of the Union, the observance of the Constitution, and the harmonizing of the country.

They regard the course generally pursued by Congress towards the South as a mistaken party policy, both in reference to the future politics of the South and the relations of the whites and the freedmen ; tending to force the whole South back into the Democratic ranks notwithstanding its displeasure with its Northern allies, and to excite increased unfriendly feeling between the races and render the position of the freedmen more doubtful and difficult.

They admit that they had utterly underrated the strength and depth of the national feeling for the Union by which the Rebellion was overthrown ; but they do not believe in any such devotion on the part of the North to the interests of the freedmen, now that their personal rights are firmly established, as to justify the policy of those Republicans who would postpone reconstruction simply to secure at the South an extension of colored suffrage that has been repudiated in the Northern States ; and they anticipate in the coming elections a marked diminution of the Republican strength, and where the Republican party is divided they look for the election of Democratic members. They profess indifference to the Constitutional Amendments now before Congress, declaring that they will never be adopted by the Southern States ;

and they rejoice in the defeat by Republican votes in the Senate of the first amendment that had passed the House, basing representation upon the actual voters; for that amendment having been approved by the President, they think would have been adopted, in which case the future power of the South would have been permanently curtailed; whereas by its defeat the number of their representatives will remain unchanged until after 1870, with thirty members in addition to the number to which they would be entitled by their white population; and this number will be then increased to fifty by the new census, adding two-fifths to the count of the freedmen.

In 1868 they anticipate the complete re-establishment of their party by the election of a President with the aid of the electoral votes of the South, which they believe no Congress will dare to reject after the governmental recognition of those States in the Amendment to the Constitution. Then, if not before, they will proceed to repudiate the National War Debt, of which a suggestion was early thrown out by Governor Seymour of New York; or if this should prove too difficult a task, from the policy adopted by Mr. Chase of giving the bulk of the population an interest in its inviolability, they will either relieve the South of its share of the debt, throwing the entire burden upon the North, or, which they think may answer the same purpose, they will generously compensate the South for the slaves that have been emancipated through the action of the President.

Whether this opposition view of the situation, thus

hastily sketched, contains anything that will be new to you may be a question, but it seems to me to suggest a possibility, at least, of danger to the Union party and the national interests ; and to prudent statesmen a suggestion of danger should open the way to its avoidance.

THE DANGERS THREATENED BY A DISSOLUTION OF THE UNION PARTY.

When the majestic principles of the Union party shall have been thoroughly incorporated into the national policy ; when the last trace of slavery and the aristocracy it has engendered, and the last possibility of a sectional issue based upon its remains, shall have disappeared, the Union party will naturally dissolve in the face of new issues, but the parties who succeed it will bear its emblem upon their banners.

In advance, however, of that time, and while slavery is yet struggling like a scotched snake, and Emancipation is not yet a complete success, and the leaders of the Rebellion at the North and the South, untouched by the gentleness and generosity of the American people, propose to requite their magnanimity by a scheme of national repudiation, or, if that be impossible, revenge themseves for defeat in the field by imposing new taxes upon citizens of the North, the dissolution of the Union party is a very different matter. While these dangers threaten us, the dissolution of that magnificent array of loyal citizens who have saved our Republic in its grapple with slavery, and placed it at the head of the roll of nations, from which our pro-

slavery foes attempted to blot its name forever—the disruption of that party, however lightly it may be regarded in some quarters, and the succession of a party disposed to national repudiation, would, I think, be a misfortune not only for America, but for the world.

The war of the Rebellion was not a chance insurrection without a cause, a pretext, or an object; it was a contest of antagonistic principles of world-wide interest, of hereditary privilege against eternal right, of aristocratic assumption against popular freedom; and the great Union party met the shock, fought the fight, and won the victory for our country and mankind.

Wherever you find a noble people, like the Italians for instance, longing to throw off the chains of ignorance and superstition, to rid themselves of the temporal despotism of Rome, and the insolent domination of Austria, they look to the example of America as to the guiding star of freedom.

Of this I am reminded by a recent note from Garibaldi, thanking me for the proceedings of the American breakfast at Naples on Washington's birthday, in which he says:

"The sympathy which comes to me from freemen, citi-
"zens of a great nation, like yourselves, gives me courage
"for my task in the cause of Liberty and Progress.
"I regard to-day the American people as the sole
"arbiter of questions of humanity, amid the universal
"thraldom of the soul and the intellect. Please ex-

"press these, my sentiments, to your countrymen, and "believe me,

"Yours for life,

"G. GARIBALDI.

"CAPRERA, 13 March, 1866."

REPUDIATION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

The suggestion of the repudiation of the national debt, especially when sanctioned by the *quasi* prediction of so prominent an authority as Governor Horatio Seymour, would naturally find favor with the defeated party of the South, as one not to be forgotten when they may be restored to their former place in the Senate and House of Representatives; but they could not hope for the ability to accomplish so signal a revenge upon the country that had subdued them, without the cordial aid of the Northern Democracy.

It becomes, therefore, an interesting inquiry, at this point of our review of the situation, whether there is reason to suppose that any Northern party is capable of lending itself to the consummation of such a national infamy, or of increasing the heavy burthens already laid upon the shoulders of the North by those who encouraged and abetted the Rebellion.

That the Southern leaders of the Rebellion, defeated, broken, disappointed, and depressed, should be disposed to follow any Northern party that might hold out a bait so tempting, is simply in accordance with human nature.

To sit again as rulers in Congress and block the wheels of Government, to annul or depreciate the war

debt incurred in their subjection, by refusing appropriations, or to throw the burthen entirely upon the North, and then compensate themselves at the expense of the nation for the loss of their slaves, which long years ago they valued at twelve hundred millions of dollars; and to do all this, not as traitors in violation of their oaths, but as American legislators in pursuance of what they might assume to be national justice, and in accordance with a humane policy of conciliation; this is the scheme which it is hoped to accomplish through the division of the Union party, and by the aid of Democratic leaders in the North.

When, after the repeal of the Missouri compromise, Southerners were reproached with their violation of a sacred compact, they sheltered themselves under the plea that it was tendered to them by Northern men, and if now a Northern party tenders repudiation of the debt, or compensation for their slaves, why should they decline the offer?

As obvious considerations of policy forbid the introduction of repudiation or compensation as a plank in the Northern Democratic platform, it is proper to inquire how far the antecedents of the national managers in the past justify the confidence of rebel sympathizers in Europe, in their readiness to tamper with the national credit, and increase the burthens of the Northern people, in order to secure again the support of the rebel leaders of the South, and by their aid re-establish the national ascendency of the party.

Governmental credit involves national power as well as national honor, and if a division of the Unionists

in the coming elections is to render probable or even possible the success of a coalition having small regard to the faith of our Republic, the differences at Washington, and the elections for Congress, will assume an importance that will be felt alike at home and abroad, by Americans and foreigners, wherever a government bond is held, or a loyal heart beats in an American bosom.

THE RECORD OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

The record of the Democratic party for the last six years is not to an American who would be proud of his countrymen a pleasant study. No ingenuity can avail to palliate the part borne by that party during the war against the Union.

When, on the 8th of January last, they met at Tammany, to celebrate the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans, and to renew, as they expressed it, their pledge that "the Union must and shall be preserved;" to proclaim to the Southern States Mr. Tilden's touching assurance, "We spread a mantle of oblivion over the past," and to woo again to their embrace the wayward sisters, whom they had so lately bidden to "depart in peace," the hollowness of the farce did not deceive even their own orators; the most eloquent of whom, Mr. James T. Brady, reminded them that in its conduct during the war, "the Democratic party had proved false to the instincts, traditions, teachings, and doctrines of its faith."

That damning fact is one neither forgotten nor to be forgotten by the American people; and it is sig-

nificant of the sound sense of our citizens that, in the State elections thus far held, since the close of the war, they have not only refused to elevate to power candidates whose record was at all doubtful, but that they have refused to honor candidates whose patriotism had been beyond question, when those gentlemen retiring from the Union party had re-appeared in the Democratic ranks, and attempted by their own loyalty to reflect respectability upon a disloyal party.

The facts that sustain Mr. Brady's denunciations of the falsity of the party are fresh in our recollection.

For nearly thirty years the Southern leaders had been contemplating secession, as a thing to be accomplished the moment they ceased to control the national Government; and about the time of the nullification by South Carolina, in 1832, a medal was struck, as Mr. Pollard tells us in his Southern history of the war, inscribed "John C. Calhoun, First President of the Southern Confederacy."

When, in 1860, South Carolina passed the first ordinance of secession, it was proposed, in stating the causes of their action, to justify it by the election of Mr. Lincoln, by the escape of fugitive slaves, and by their fears of the Abolitionists. Messrs. Rhett and Parker, and Keitt and Inglis, promptly declared the alleged reasons to be utterly untrue, and said they had been engaged in the movement for a long series of years, and similar testimony equally conclusive has been furnished by Mr. Everett and other statesmen.

During those long years of anticipation, these secessionists, with the cordial aid of Northern Democrats,

were employed in strengthening themselves for the coming struggle, and extending in advance through the national Government the area of slavery. To them and their intended treachery we owed the Texan Rebellion and the war with Mexico, the efforts to bully Spain into the sale of Cuba by threatening that we would seize if we could not buy it, the fillibustering expeditions to Central America, and the lawless revival of the African slave trade.

During those long years, while this plot for dissolution was in progress, the Democratic leaders of the North charged the anti-slavery party, which was organized to expose the immoral character and unconstitutional designs of slavery, with the very crime of disunion that the South with their aid was preparing to perpetrate. They denounced as unfaithful to the Constitution and traitors to the Union those who adhered to the doctrines of the Fathers of the Republic, and they demanded and obtained the support and confidence of the American people by their solemn professions of national pride and national affection.

With the cry, "down with disunion," they perpetrated outrages which, if we did not remember, we could hardly credit. Mobs in our cities, encouraged by the Democratic press, plundered, sacked, burned, and murdered. There were robberies of the mails by the national postmasters; the denial by Congress of freedom of debate and the right of petition; legislative bills of pains and penalties for the punishment of free speech, and a free press; an anti-slavery clergyman dragged from his pulpit and imprisoned as a nuisance;

anti-slavery presses broken and scattered ; an anti-slavery editor shot like a dog ; brutal insults towards men, women, and children, who disapproved of slavery ; such were the deeds by which the Democratic party illustrated their devotion for the Union. They denounced all the Anti-Slavery and Free Soil parties, as parties akin to the Hartford Conventionists, who they said deserted the country in time of war. They rallied the people ever and again in Mass Conventions to save the Constitution, and they swore continually by all that was sacred, that the Union must be preserved.

At length came the traitor's hour, and the blow was struck, and the Democratic Administration, whose members, sworn to protect the country, held their seats and drew their pay from the Treasury of the people they were betraying, played so effectively into the hands of the rebels that on the 4th March, 1861, the work of national disintegration was far advanced ; and of the perfect Union intrusted to Mr. Buchanan by a too confiding nation, he relinquished to his successor what his partisans believed and hoped would prove but the disjointed fragments of our great Republic. The Treasury empty ; forts, arsenals, navy-yards surrendered ; arms and munitions stolen and dispersed, our little navy scattered and disabled, our army officers in part demoralized, and treachery lurking in every department of the Government !

The world has no record of so wide-spread and desperate a wreck of public integrity and private honor.

Insurrections and rebellions abound in sacred and

profane history, but the treachery of our last Democratic Administration towards the American people stands among them unapproachable in infamy.

The darkest picture of brutalizing influences of slavery, even that drawn by Jefferson himself, have been exceeded in blackness by the conduct of those who call themselves his disciples.

Their wanton outrages on the rights and feelings of the blacks had taught them to trample with a like indifference on the rights and feelings of their white countrymen.

Denying first the claims of humanity and justice, they gradually reached the point occupied by the traitors in the Cabinet and the Senate, who discarded alike honor and shame, who retained their seats to complete their treason, and lauged to scorn their oaths to protect the American Constitution.

Then was the hour to test fidelity to our National Union. Once before had South Carolina inaugurated rebellion, when the Democrats headed by General Jackson administered the Government. His bitterest opponent, Daniel Webster, had said:

"I shall support the President in maintaining this "Union and this Constitution, and the cause shall not "fail for want of any aid, any efforts, any glorious co-"operation of mine. When the standard of the Union "is raised and waves over my head, God forbid that I "should inquire who is commissioned to unfurl it and "bear it up! I only ask in what manner I, as an "humble individual, can best discharge my duty in de-"fending it."

We know too well the sort of support given to the stars and stripes by those Northern Democrats who were banded to betray it, and who whenever they raise their country's flag must be reminded of their abortive efforts to abase it.

The world speaks of the Southern Rebellion and Southern traitors, but we had to contend not simply against the slave-holding secessionists at the South, but against an army of renegade Democrats at the North abetting the rebels in every form.

To Democratic leaders at New York we were indebted largely for that organized hostility of our European foes, which encountered our merchants on every sea, and our ministers at every court, and found vent in the utterances of a foreign press filled with eulogies of the rebels, defamation of our Republic, and predictions of its fall.

If the Southern leaders were fiercely indignant with their allies at New York for not giving them the armed assistance upon which they had relied, they have perhaps undervalued the services actually performed by them.

The Aristocratic Governments and ruling classes of Europe, and the moneyed kings on whom they rely, had long looked with a dislike latterly intensified by fear upon the growing prosperity of our country, and, rightly attributing that prosperity to our national unity, they had long desired and indeed predicted that our nationality would be destroyed by dissensions among ourselves.

During the Rebellion it seemed as if, for the execution of their designs against the honor and integrity

of the country, they had found convenient and skilful tools among the Northern Democracy to assist the rebels in their work by hampering the national power and depreciating the national credit.

We have sometimes wondered at the strange belief prevalent in Europe in our demoralization as a people, their undisguised contempt for the citizens of the North, their exaggerated ideas of the power of the South, and their confidence in our early dissolution; but why should they not have deemed their day of triumph near, when they saw prominent Democrats at New York giving aid and comfort to the rebels at Richmond; when they learned that these same gentlemen, intriguing against their own Government, had besought from Lord Lyons foreign intervention; when they saw the once National Democratic party betraying the country in time of war, and beheld their national committee that formerly swore by Jefferson and Jackson, led by an eminent foreign banker, late the official servant of the Hapsburgs, and still the accredited agent of the Rothschilds?

Of the anti-American tone of our higher Democratic circles, and their reflex influence on the Aristocratic classes of Europe, a curious proof was given by an English nobleman, now the Under-Secretary of War, who while in New York at a fashionable entertainment, deemed it no discourtesy to his host or the guests to wear a symbol of the Confederate flag that was at the time borne by the pirates of the Atlantic.

That behavior on the part of one, the motto of whose order, *noblesse oblige*, would have imperatively for-

bidden such an exhibition of his sympathies in any company whom he supposed loyal to their country, may assist us to understand how much we are indebted to the leading Democrats of New York, not simply for the tone of the British Aristocracy, and the British press, but for the ill-omened judgment of our enemies, which induced them to smile upon the inauguration of that cowardly system of piracy, whose exploits, applauded and approved when our dissolution was held to be inevitable, the merchants and statesmen of England now remember as precedents with dismay.

THE DEMOCRATIC INTRIGUES WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

Before dismissing the Northern Democracy, it may be remarked that, however great their anxiety "to throw a mantle of oblivion over the past," to pass over the appeal to arms against a constitutional election as on the whole a blunder, and to recommence the political game on the old footing, there is one passage especially in the secret history of the Rebellion upon which the American people have a right to be enlightened.

I refer to their intrigues with the British Government, whose policy proved so disastrous to the commerce of New York; and the matter involves whatever of reputation may still cling to the wreck of the Democratic party. Who were the secret advisers in New York of the British Minister, Lord Lyons, in those interviews, whose only precedent in our history was

when Benedict Arnold conferred with Sir Henry Clinton? The fact that such intrigues existed—a fact that would have astounded the country, had we not ceased to wonder at any new infamy in the progress of the Rebellion—we chanced to learn through a despatch of Lord Lyons, which was included by oversight, or with a motive, among the papers printed by order Parliament.

It appears that the men who approached Lord Lyons professed to be, and were believed by him to be, New York gentlemen of prominent position, and that they sought through him to shape the policy of the British Government for the purposes of the Democratic party. Profound silence on the part of the Democratic leaders in New York has met this charge against their personal honor and political integrity, officially presented to the world under the signature of the British Minister and in the records of the British Government; and yet here is a charge not simply of treason against our National Government, but of untold infamy as regards the American people. The nation at large, and we of New York especially, have a right to know the names and the credentials of these men, who, in time of war, assumed in the name of the Democratic party to open negotiations with a foreign government.

Were they actually the men they represented themselves to be, or were they fellows of the baser sort, tools of rebels at Richmond, who the better to effect their purposes assumed the name of New York gentlemen?

The capture at sea of such open commissioners as Slidell and Mason was hailed with satisfaction by the American people ; but the Government, for reasons not yet explained, would seem thus far to have taken no steps to arraign before the tribunals of justice the New York intriguers with the British Government.

Southern Unionists may well complain, as Mr. Botts has already done, that no steps have yet been taken to punish the rebels of the North, whose guilt was greater than that of the secessionists of the South : in as much as the Northerners had no apology in the doctrine of State allegiance, and were traitors alike to the National Government and their own States, besides plotting against the Union while enjoying its protection and professing loyalty to its flag.

If the Government for any reason hesitates to arraign the prominent Democratic leaders, whose names are associated with the developments of Lord Lyons, there is no reason why the people and the press should not arraign them at the bar of public opinion ; and judge of their defence, if any they have, for their treasonable and disloyal attempt to induce the intervention of England in the domestic affairs of the American Republic.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES RESTING UPON CONGRESS.

In considering the propriety of the hesitancy of Congress to yield their control of the reconstruction question by the adoption of any plan, however safe it may appear, by which the vacant seats in the Senate and the House shall be immediately filled with Southern

representatives, with the sanction of what oaths soever, it is proper to remember their position and responsibilities.

They do not represent the disloyal faction that sympathized with the rebels, who denounced the war as a failure, and demanded that it should cease. They represent the loyal American people, who fought it to the close, and who, however magnanimous in relinquishing indemnity for the past, are inflexible in requiring securities for the future, and who would never forgive their Congressional servants were they, through any blunder or weakness, to relinquish by legislation the safety accomplished by such sacrifices in the field, by the valor of our army and navy, and by the stern devotion of the people.

Upon this point the confident expectation of rebel sympathizers in Europe of "National Repudiation," compensation for their slaves seems deserving of attention.

If these expectations should be accomplished by the reinstatement in Congress of Southern Members, in such manner as to enable the Northern Democrats, by their aid, to control again the National Government, they would, in that case, have attained, in spite of their defeat in the war, a large share of what, in the first instance, they hoped to accomplish by the Rebellion.

Although the plan of a Southern Confederacy had been entertained for some thirty years, the rebel leaders anticipated almost to the last moment the ability to accomplish by the aid of their Northern allies a

coup d'état, which should give them, with but little bloodshed, all that they desired.

THE ORIGINAL DESIGN OF THE REBEL LEADERS.

The plan of operations I first learned from a source which I knew to be reliable about the first of January, 1861, when South Carolina alone had as yet passed an act of secession ; and, I may properly add, in reference to an item of such curious historic interest, that its correctness was attested a little more than a year ago by the late Lieutenant-General, whose memory Europe and America unite to honor.

It was at a dinner at Mr. Alfred Pell's that I related to General Scott what I had heard precisely as I shall state it now, and that veteran soldier listened attentively to the recital, nodded assent to each separate item, and significantly remarked at its close : "It is a true bill." I need hardly say that the opportunities of General Scott for learning accurately the designs of the rebels were unusually good, partly from the confidence with which he was treated by his old Southern friends, when they hoped to secure his adhesion to their cause, and again from his position as commander-in-chief during the early stages of the war.

The original rebel plan, whose correctness is thus attested, was as follows :

After the secession of South Carolina, the other cotton States were to follow as rapidly as the machinery of secession, by means of conventions, could be put into operation. That matter was decided and in train ; the more Northern and border States, which

were still doubtful, were to be coaxed, or dragooned into the movement as might be necessary, and especially Maryland. As soon as Maryland should secede, she was to pass an act rescinding the act of cession to the United States of that part of the District of Columbia which had formerly belonged to Maryland. The moment that act was passed, Washington was to be seized under color of law as belonging to the State of Maryland. The new Confederacy was to be improvised, the Constitution and laws of the United States were to be re-adopted as they stood, with a single exception making slavery universal.

The new Confederacy was to be proclaimed the United States *de facto*. The allegiance of the army and navy was to be claimed, and would, they believed, be yielded. Recognition by the foreign ministers at Washington was to be demanded, and, as they felt assured would be conceded; an invitation was to be extended to the Northern and Western States, excepting New England, and perhaps Western New York, to resume their places in the new Confederacy on precisely the same terms as in the old; those invitations they thought would be gradually accepted and the new Government was to move on.

THE SCHEME DEFEATED BY MEMBERS OF THE CLUB.

This was the bold outline of a plan that depended for its execution on the concurrence of the Northern Democracy, and which but for the efforts of the members the Union League Club might have been partially successful. It was through their vigilance that

Congress and the North were with difficulty aroused to the dangers that threatened the Capital ; and it was owing to information conveyed to the Government, by one of the most faithful and untiring of your body, that the Maryland Legislature, the moment it met, without waiting for a State convention, intended to prepare an act of secession, and commit Maryland to the fortunes of the Rebellion, that the orders were promptly given to General McClellan to arrest its members in advance of their assembling. This timely move, of the occasion for which the country has, I believe, never been publicly advised, checked the audacious plan by which Washington was to have been seized under color of law, with all its muniments and archives, and a new Government *de facto* proclaimed and recognized by the foreign ministers, in a manner well calculated to demoralize and dismay the country.

This brief reference to the plot and the manner of its defeat may be interesting, not simply as recalling one of many dangers which we have providentially escaped, but as reminding us that if now Congress, through any error of judgment, should admit to their seats in the Senate and the House disloyal Southern members in such numbers as to enable them, in conjunction with the Northern Democracy, again to control the Government, they would accomplish in great part the original object of the Rebellion, and might expect from their constituents, on their return to their homes, a reception such as would have met Sherman had he surrendered to Hood, or Meade and Grant if they had traitorously laid down their arms to Lee. Such a lamen-

table result, we all know, is as little desired by the President as it is by Congress and the people.

THE QUESTION OF RECONSTRUCTION.

The differences that have arisen between the Executive and Congress on this question, and which I trust are being rapidly and harmoniously adjusted, have been purposely exaggerated by the opponents of the Government, and unwisely accepted by some of its supporters as irreconcilable as regards principle and policy.

Looking at the case in the light of the past action and utterances of the two branches, I see no such irreconcilable difference ; but simply a case where both parties are practically agreed as to the end to be aimed at, and generally as to the virtual powers of the Government ; and where they differ only as to the best method of accomplishing a common purpose.

One reason perhaps for the partial difference in their view is at once natural and legitimate. The President, while the head of the Union party, is also the Executive of the whole Republic, and may properly regard himself as the representative and guardian of the constitutional rights of every section and of every class, especially of those now unrepresented in Congress ; whereas the Senators are peculiarly the representatives of their States, and the members of their respective constituencies. But apart from this difference, in the scope of their responsibilities arising from the wise distribution of power under our National Constitution, the President and the Union members of Congress represent together the rights, the honor, and the free-

dom of our country; and no differences of opinion, however vexatious in regard to the details of reconstruction, should allow us for a moment to forget that the loyalty of the President has stood the severest test, and that, Southerner and slaveholder though he was, he stands at once the champion of the Union and the emancipator of the slave.

The President, more convinced than Congress of the reliance to be placed on the returning loyalty of the South, and of the safety of admitting their representatives, with certain qualifications, has recommended that cause as feasible, and safe. Congress, on the other hand, assisted doubtless by the advice of their constituents, coming to a different conclusion, have rejected the plan as involving a possible risk which they feel they ought not to incur.

Of the sovereign right of the American people, and of the duty of Congress as their servants, to be assured of the loyalty and good faith of those who recently opposed them in the field, before they are readmitted to a participation in the Government, there is no shadow of question.

The President himself has acted upon this principle; and, firm as he is in the support of the constitutional rights of the States, he properly insisted on the overthrow of slavery, which formed the very foundation of their State Constitutions, as the first condition towards their restoration to the rights they had forfeited by Rebellion.

The reconstruction of our Republic on the basis of equal freedom and with fraternal harmony between the

sections, is a matter of such solemnity and grandeur that to permit the intrusion of private griefs, personal disputes, or partisan motives, may be properly regarded as a crime.

And here I will venture to say, for I but utter the opinion of thousands of our countrymen in Europe, that the bitter personalities indulged in at either end of Pennsylvania Avenue, have excited on this side of the water surprise, mortification, and regret, as not simply increasing the difficulties of harmonious action, but as tending to impair the influence of our Government and lower its dignity before the world.

The reconstruction of our Republic is already far advanced by the rescue of the South from the rebel tyranny at Richmond, which had extinguished all State rights and personal freedom, and by their restoration to the protection of the National Government, with universal freedom opening a new future of intelligence and prosperity. The completion of the task is one that demands the wisest, calmest statesmanship, for it is the work not for a day, but for all time. It concerns the destiny of our Continent, and the fulfilment of its highest hopes, our peace and harmony, our prosperity and strength at home, our honor, power, and prestige abroad. Upon our successful solution of this problem, if problem it can still be called, where the solution is so plain, depends the continuance of that moral influence which, since the fall of the Rebellion and the emancipation of the slaves, has made the very name of America a power, that in distant lands inspires the masses with hope, and their oppressors with fear.

Of the great questions which agitate the country, the most immediately important, that which concerns the readjustment of the representation from the South upon a legitimate basis, since the reason for allowing them the three-fifths representation for persons held to service has ceased to exist, will I presume be provided for in an amendment to the Constitution with the cordial approval of the President; and it is to be hoped that all further legislation bearing on the subject of reconstruction, will be marked with such courtesy and wisdom on the part of Congress, as to facilitate and command the approval of the Executive.

NATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE UNION PARTY.

The policy of the Union party must continue to be, as it has been, broad and national, looking always to the welfare of the whole country, and never to that of a section or a faction. Like all great parties, it has the misfortune to be misrepresented, and hampered at times by politicians bent upon power and plunder, ready to adopt any principle or policy, anti-slavery or pro-slavery, that may for the time assist their purpose, or even to sacrifice at once the party and the country.

This was done by the professed Republicans who insidiously, at a most critical moment, defeated Wadsworth, and elected in his stead Horatio Seymour. And that dark deed should be remembered whenever the trading politicians, by whom it was perpetrated, recommend or oppose a national policy, and especially when their counsels tend to divide and weaken the Union party, as on that occasion, when their treachery sub-

jected the country to prolongation of the war at a fearful waste of blood and treasure.

THE POLICY OF THE OPPOSITION.

We must expect, of course, a continuance of the stereotyped objections of unconstitutionality interposed on the part of the Democracy to every measure, executive or congressional, that tends to extinguish the sectional issues by which they have thriven, and to secure from future interruption the national harmony.

Their stern repugnance on constitutional grounds for the last five years to every proceeding that threatened death to the Rebellion, or promised freedom and safety to the Republic, recalls an interesting revelation which I quote from memory, made by Dr. Russell, of the *London Times*, not in his original letters, but in his subsequently published "Diary." He was dining with a Democratic banker of New York at the commencement of Mr. Lincoln's administration, where he met Governor Seymour, and other politicians of that party, who favored him with a frank development of their policy. They did not conceal their pleasure at the sea of troubles in which the new Government of their opponents was floundering, nor their resolve whenever the Unionists raised their heads above water to "knock them back with the Constitution."

We remember how invariably this policy was carried out, and how fiercely every act of Mr. Lincoln or of Congress for the preservation of the country, was denounced as illegal.

Governor Seymour had already proclaimed their doc-

trine, that "successful coercion by the North" would be equally "revolutionary" with "successful secession by the South," and each succeeding step from the resolve of Mr. Lincoln to execute the law, and repossess the stolen forts, was in turn denounced as an unconstitutional usurpation. The call for troops, the organizing of the army, every right thing which the President did, every judicious law which Congress enacted, the freeing of the slaves that came to our lines, the employment of slaves to relieve our soldiers, the Proclamation of Emancipation, the arming of the freedmen, the Amendment of the Constitution, these and a thousand other acts were each and all revolutionary and immoral procedures, over which the Democracy bewailed and lamented.

But the worst and most unconstitutional feature of the whole was that it proved, in Governor Seymour's phrase, "successful coercion."

The campaigns of Grant at Vicksburg and of Meade at Gettysburg, and those of Sherman in Georgia, and of Grant on his summer's line from the Rapidan to Richmond, were decidedly revolutionary; and while the loyal heart of the American people bounded with joy, Mayor Gunther, on behalf of the New York Democracy, refused to permit public rejoicings over the victories which in saving the American Republic brought to his party shame, grief, and disappointment.

INTENDED REBELLION AT THE NORTH.

In referring to the victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, the one opening the Mississippi to the

West, and the other rolling back the invading army of Lee, occurring together in July, 1863, it should be remembered that they thwarted the impending design of rebellion in the North and West to strengthen the invaders, and that but for those signal events, a more desperate character would have been exhibited by the riots at New York, that for a time revelled in murder and arson, as if to teach us what we might expect if we permitted the treason of slavery to triumph over American freedom.

THE SUFFRAGE QUESTION.

In regard to the question of suffrage among the freedmen, I am strongly inclined to believe, as I have already intimated, that the national policy of equal rights established by the Amendment to the Constitution, restoring in their full force, without the exception worked by slavery, the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence, not as "glittering generalities," but as sober facts, has rendered inconsistent with the principles of republican government, under the present national policy, the class legislation of the States based upon the now extinguished exception.

Should the Supreme Court, upon a thorough review of the national policy as affected by the Amendment, reach the conclusion that the National Constitution as amended no longer permits the States to establish inequality, by the outlawry or disfranchisement of a class, the difficulties heretofore anticipated from an interference by Congress with the supposed rights of the States to disfranchise at their pleasure will be avoided.

The decision will affect North and South alike, and the question of suffrage on an equal basis will be opened for readjustment in all the States, with such conditions as regards residence, intelligence, and taxation or property, as each State may severally prescribe.

The antagonism of race which has hitherto existed between the whites and the blacks was the fruit of slavery, and unless fostered by unequal laws and for partisan purposes, it is likely to yield steadily to fair treatment, to the advancement wrought by education, and especially to the influence of a common interest.

This was the case on our country's battle-fields, our Generals know it well, before the inspiration of a common patriotism and a common danger.

Not alone the policy, but the duty and necessity of a gradual extension to the freedmen of the right of suffrage, as they prove themselves fit for it, has been recognized by leading minds of the most conservative habit, and the least liable to be influenced by a visionary philanthropy or exaggerated views of the capacity of the race.

Our observant statesmen early in the war who were intimate with the scope of American principles, and impressed with the logic of events, instinctively recognized the fact that whenever our country should enroll the slaves as defenders of the flag, she would initiate a policy and incur responsibilities that could not be repudiated when the war was ended.

"If," said General Sherman, "you admit the negro "to this struggle for any purpose, he has a right to "stay in it for all; and when the fight is over the

"hand that drops the musket cannot be denied the "ballot."

Mr. Lincoln, whose words will ever fall upon attentive ears in the country that he loved and served so well, in speaking of the glorious result of the war in saving the destinies of our Republic, recalled the fact that there were "some black men who can re-"member that they helped mankind to this great con-"summation;" and in his letter recommending that some of them should be let in, in defining the suffrage in Louisiana, he said with a prophetic truth, which the American people are beginning to realize, that "they "would probably help in some trying time to keep "the jewel of liberty in the family of freedom."

Mr. President Johnson has expressed himself distinctly in favor of the propriety of negro suffrage. He said:

"Were he in Tennessee he would try to introduce "negro suffrage gradually, first to those who had "served in the army, those who could read and write, "and perhaps with a property qualification of two "hundred or two hundred and fifty dollars."

Touching the general qualifications of electors in our Republic, Mr. Lincoln asked whether we ought not to elevate rather than degrade the franchise, remarking that "education and the elective franchise should "go hand in hand." That is the conviction of the most thoughtful among our people, and it has been well remarked by Mr. Coles, of California, that "edu-"cation is the handmaid of liberty, and it is indis-"pensable to the proper exercise of American citizen-"ship."

NECESSITY FOR EDUCATION AT THE SOUTH.

To secure ignorance on the part of the masses was the deliberate policy of slavery; and the extent to which it was carried, making them the helpless victims of the Rebellion, is amply proved by the testimony of Southern statesmen, which tends to dispel the illusion that, while it is safe to intrust suffrage to the Southern whites, it would be dangerous to extend it to the loyal and intelligent freedmen.

The Hon. J. S. Lumpkin, of Georgia, long ago described the poor whites of the South as "far below the slaves in morals and civilization," and he said further, "not one in a thousand of them can read, nor one in ten thousand can write;" and added that he had met "many who had never seen a book or a newspaper, and some who had never heard of a Bible or spelling-book." This single item of Southern testimony, explaining the facility with which the secession leaders precipitated the Rebellion upon the Southern people, reminds us of the grand difficulty in reconstructing the South on a sure basis of prosperity, and shows that the work to be accomplished requires popular agencies, beyond an amendment to the Constitution or Congressional legislation.

Slavery may be destroyed in a day, but its unpleasant traits may survive, as in Jamaica, for more than a generation. The brutal ignorance, political degeneracy, and social degradation that it engenders, demand for their extinction systematic and persevering efforts.

THE NATIONAL FREEDMEN'S AID UNION.

Thus far the National Government has left to the voluntary action of the American people this essential enterprise, and the National Freedmen's Aid Union, representing various societies throughout the country, whose Union, it may be here remarked, was in part accomplished by members of our Club, have now in their schools 70,000 children. In advancing that noble work the Club will confer a permanent blessing both on the freedmen and on the country.

Moral influences alone can renovate the States so long cursed by the cruel rule of a despotic oligarchy, and direct aright public opinion, that great power of the age, which no American should undervalue who reviews the decline and fall of American slavery and of the party which sustained it.

EFFECT OF IGNORANCE UPON SUFFRAGE IN NEW YORK.

Universal education in a Republic governed by popular suffrage is a thing not simply desirable but absolutely essential to the safety and welfare of the people. We, of New York, know by daily experience the evils that result from the exercise of the suffrage among a population uninstructed in the elements of American Freedom and unable to read the Constitution and laws of the country.

Inevitably an unenlightened constituency become the blind tools of designing politicians, and in New York the less educated Democracy were made throughout the Rebellion to do the work of the aristocrats and despots

of Europe, whom they do not profess to love, in assisting the rebel attempt to divide the Union and to overthrow at once the American Government and popular freedom.

The school-house and the village church are the true safeguards of republican liberty, the true guarantees for wise legislation; and none know better than the tax-payers of New York the dangers that result from an unenlightened constituency in fostering the insolent ambition of unscrupulous leaders in facilitating the corruption that thrives by "the lobby" and "the ring," and saddles the industry of the community with exorbitant taxes, the burthen of which is increased by the thought that the larger portion is diverted from its legitimate end to minister to private and political profligacy.

A PARTY OF FREEDOM AT THE SOUTH.

There is one other point on which I believe the Club can exert a wide and beneficial influence, and that is in developing a party of Union and freedom in the South.

Under the despotic rule of slavery, intensified during the war into absolute tyranny, the anti-slavery sentiment which was known to exist among the Southern people, was denied expression and expansion, and the old habit of caution, with perhaps a lingering fear of the unextinguished power of slavery, may still repress the real feeling of thousands of the people.

Already are the economic influences of freedom, in advancing industry and enabling it to compete with

capital, teaching the Southern masses to realize the blessings of a free government, and to appreciate aright the blundering statesmanship which sacrificed them to the interest of the slaveholder and then involved them all in a common calamity.

There is reason to believe that the most influential and respectable men of the South, and some of their eminent statesmen, are convinced that a new and enlightened policy of freedom and justice is essential to recover the States from the ruin caused by slavery, and completed by the Rebellion. This is the class, strengthened as it will presently be by immigration, upon whom should devolve the task of inaugurating and developing the prosperity of the South and securing the happiness of both whites and blacks by harmony between the races.

The importance of those races to each other is large and mutual. To the presence of the freedmen, hardy, acclimated, accustomed to labor, skilled in the work of Southern plantations, and, as Stephens declared, singularly faithful, the Southern States that now treat them wisely will be indebted for a great share of their future prosperity. And now, the transition period, it were from slavery to freedom, is the time for establishing those just and friendly relations which will secure a permanent cordiality, and prevent the growth of the ill-will that in Jamaica resulted in a brutal massacre on the one side, and judicial murders on the other.

SOUND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN GEORGIA.

To show in part the foundations of my belief in regard to the increasing intelligence and right feeling of a large portion of the Southern people, allow me to quote a passage from the speech of Mr. Stephens to the Legislature of Georgia, to which I have already alluded, and which is the more significant from the influence he unquestionably wielded at the South. After stating their acquiescence in the result of the war, and showing that it was their true policy to seek again happiness and prosperity in the Union, he referred to the abolition of slavery, and to the new duties it imposed on them, in a spirit which I confess I think argues most favorably for the success of emancipation, and the establishment of just and cordial relations as equal citizens between those who so recently were masters and slaves.

"The wisest and best of men err in their judg-
"ment as to the probable workings of any new sys-
"tem. Let us, therefore, give this one a fair and
"just trial without prejudice, and with that earnest-
"ness of purpose that always looks hopefully to suc-
"cess. It is an ethnological problem, on the solution
"of which depends not only the best interests of both
"races, but it may be the existence of one or the
"other, if not both.

"The duty of giving this new system a fair and just
"trial will require of you, as legislators of the land,
"great changes in its former laws in regard to this
"large class of population. Wise and humane pro-

" visions should be made for them. It is not for me " to go into detail; suffice it to say on this occasion, " that ample and full protection should be secured to " them, so that they may start equal before the law " in the possession and enjoyment of all rights of per- " sonal liberty and property. Many considerations " claim this at your hands; among these may be stated " their fidelity in times past. They cultivated your " fields, ministered to your personal wants and com- " forts, nursed and reared your children, and even in " the hour of danger and peril they were in the main " true to you and yours.

" To them we owe a debt of gratitude as well as " acts of kindness. This should be done, because they " are poor, untutored, uninformed, many of them help- " less, liable to be imposed upon, and need it. Legis- " lation should ever look to the protection of the weak " against the strong. All obstacles, if there be any, " should be removed which can possibly hinder or re- " tard the blacks from improving their condition to the " extent of their capacity. All proper aid should be " given to their own efforts, channels of education " should be opened up to them, schools and the usual " means of moral and intellectual training should be " encouraged among them. This will be the dictate " not only of what is right and just, but it is also the " promptings of the highest consideration of interest."

The speech from which are taken these significant extracts was ordered to be engrossed on the minutes of each branch of the Georgia Legislature; and I have not learned that the honest policy thus boldly enunci-

ated as applicable to the present situation, by one who had been in favor of making slavery the corner-stone of a Southern empire, excited on the part of his hearers either displeasure or disapproval.

SHARE IN THE WORK OF ALL LOYAL CITIZENS.

While the duty of devising means of reconciling the difficulties in the reconstruction question rests immediately with the legislative branch of the Government, the larger share of the work devolves properly upon all loyal citizens.

As General Schurz said, only the "negative" part of the Revolution is as yet accomplished; the rest is to be performed, by those moral influences which the people are to direct, and those economic agencies that are working so surely in our favor.

The evils existing at the South that are represented as creating the chief danger in immediate reconstruction are, in the words of the same officer, "an utter "absence of national feeling," a sentiment that so strongly inspires the freedmen; and next, a want of confidence, not unnatural under the circumstances, between the whites and the blacks. And General Schurz, in his very able report, justly remarked that the surest course of changing the feelings of the Southern people is to embark them "in a new career of activity in a common field "with those whom they have so long con- "sidered as their enemies."

SOCIAL COMMINGLING RECOMMENDED BY GEN. GRANT.

General Grant in his letter to the President on the 18th of last December, said:

"It is to be regretted that there cannot be a greater "commingling at this time between the citizens of both "sections, and particularly of those intrusted with the "law-making power."

That suggestion from our Lieutenant-General is one that our Club can act upon with perhaps more weight and influence than any body in the country, and I respectfully commend to your consideration the propriety of cordially opening your doors to Southern gentlemen coming to New York, who, however deeply involved they may have been in the Rebellion, are now prepared not simply to acquiesce in the result of the war and the abolition of slavery, but to assist in the work of reconstruction upon the basis of universal education and equal right.

In your rooms, in addition to the members who represent the loyal sentiment of our city, and Northern governors and State legislators, they will meet the gallant officers of the Army and Navy, who come to the Union League Club, assured that they will encounter none who denounced the war as a failure while it was being fought, or who refused to rejoice over Union victories when they were won, or who reserved the renewal of their pledges that the Union should be preserved, until after their efforts to dissolve it had been defeated.

There they will meet also Northern statesmen, and

many of the Union senators and members of Congress, who, I trust, more frequently than ever before, will accept our welcome whenever they visit our metropolis: and they will learn how truly with the determination in the Northern mind, to insist that our national policy shall henceforth be that of equal and universal freedom, is blended a deep and earnest desire that no sectional strife may again disturb our peace, but that the South and the North may be more closely bound than ever before in the bonds of a common interest and mutual affection.

OUR NATIONAL POSITION IN EUROPE.

The position of America at this moment, as contrasted with that which she occupied during the Rebellion, or with that now held by those powers of Europe that were then hoping for our dissolution, is one of which our countrymen on the Continent are constantly reminded, and which, to all who did their duty in the struggle, affords occasion for national pride and thankfulness.

Curiously enough, the German quarrel over the territory filched from Denmark, and that may yet involve in the war the whole of Europe, is regarded by eminent statesmen as an incidental result of our American troubles. The plundering of Denmark took place at a time when England was still ringing with the musical refrain of her Laureate's greeting to the Sea-King's daughter from over the sea:

> —Saxon, Dane, or Norman, we,
> Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
> We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
> Alexandra!

And it is said that that wrong to Denmark would not have been permitted by the British Government, of whose course on the subject Englishmen rarely speak with pride, had not our dissatisfaction with their conduct as a neutral, in the matter of the iron-clads, rendered it inconvenient for her at the time to appear as a belligerent.

Be this as it may, England, remembering St. Albans and the Alabama, frankly confesses her astonishment, and all Europe heeds the lesson, as Grant and Meade guard the neutrality of our Canadian border, and teach the world that America, in fulfilling her duties to foreign nations upon the broad basis of international right, scorns the diplomacy of finesse; and, in accordance with her own bright precedents from the days of Washington, preserves stainless her own honor.

France has heard, at last, the voice of the American people, speaking more plainly than the Department at Washington, or our Minister at Paris, disapproving the continuance of her rule in Mexico; and her troops are to withdraw, as she promises, with no stipulation on our part for the recognition of the bastard empire of Maximilian; and thus our olden friendship with France is to be maintained unbroken, and our traditional policy upheld, and Europe learns that the only way to preserve our friendship is to respect our rights.

THE SITUATION AT HOME.

But the questions connected with the reconstruction of our Republic are those to which our thoughts continually revert, and I beg to add a closing word upon the topic.

The spirit of Slavery and the Rebellion still lives, though Freedom and the Union are victorious, and events indicate that the strife ended by the war is to be renewed in politics ; and the rebel sympathizers in Europe anticipate on the new battle-field an easy victory.

Taught by disastrous experience the devotion of our people to American nationality, our opponents will rally this time under the old flag, and, with the cry of the Constitution and national harmony, they hope to control the Government which they were unable to destroy, to punish the nation for its victory, and compensate the South for its defeat.

When we calmly review the past and mark the spirit of Rebellion at the North or the South, for it was the same in either section, it would be folly to shut our eyes to the dangers that threaten the country, if by personal feud or partisan faction the Union party should be demoralized or broken.

Slavery was the root of the Rebellion, but it was something more than the slavery which, introduced into the colonies by European Governments, had for two centuries been tolerated in America.

The framers of our Constitution disapproved the system, shrank from its name, and anticipated its extinction. It was within our own recollection that the new school arose in Church and State which taught that slavery was a blessing to be fostered and extended, and which, in the spirit of its enactments, put to the blush the code of Draco.

Upon this basis arose that mongrel system of athe-

ism and Christianity, which, scouting "the higher law," rested upon the code of slavery, and illustrated the Sermon on the Mount by the heathenish caste of Northern churches and the African barbarism of Southern plantations.

Renouncing the Christian doctrine of equal brotherhood—the American doctrine of equal rights—their Christianity and statesmanship were briefly comprehended in their advertisements of "slaves and other cattle to be sold at auction;" and then came by easy steps secret treason and open war; the massacre of unresisting blacks at Fort Pillow, the starvation by tens of thousands of our brave soldiers in the prisons of Andersonville, the attempted burning of New York by night with its hundreds of thousands of women and children, the New York riots and murders in July, 1863, and every other atrocity up to the murder of Lincoln, and the attempted assassination in his bed of the venerable and helpless Secretary. And here I may remark that I have heard the trial of those assassins denounced in Europe as unconstitutional, and their hanging declared to be murder, for which Mr. Johnson at some time would be held accountable.

That such utter demoralization and such wide-spread crime and misery should so rapidly have resulted from the immoral doctrine that the black men had no rights, has impressed the nation and the world; and the Christian teachers who directly or otherwise have apologized for slavery, or lent it their countenance, may well stand aghast at the part they have borne in this bloody business.

But the moral to be learned from it all is, the duty and therefore the wisdom of ending slavery not alone as we have done in its worst form, but in its every feature and its slightest incident, and reducing to practice the words of President Johnson, that the fabric of our Government rests upon the basis of popular right.

In the war we learned—our mothers and widows know at what cost—the consequences of our refusal in the beginning "to do justice and love mercy;" and now the calamities threatened us by the same spirit of Rebellion warn us in advance that our duty and our interests are identical.

The designs of disunion Democrats at home, and of the unfriendly Rothschilds and Aristocrats abroad, against our national credit and national honor, can be contemplated with equanimity, if we remember in time the suggestion of Sherman, that the hand that has wielded the musket in our defence cannot be denied the ballot, and recall the prophetic words of Lincoln, that those who "helped mankind to this great consummation," may again help in some trying time to keep the jewel of liberty in the family of freedom.

CONCLUSION.

I am told, gentlemen, by members of the Club whom I have met in Paris, and especially by the Rev. Dr. Thompson, that my election as President was intended, by a part at least of the members, as a tribute not simply to myself personally, but to the soundness of the principles, and the wisdom of the policy, with which my

name had been identified in the contest between freedom and slavery, that for thirty years has convulsed our country, and whose conclusion in National Unity and Emancipation—to which you so largely contributed—has given a new future to our Republic, and new hope to mankind.

In view of the recollections that such an announcement naturally recalls, as contrasting the present with the past, it will be more easy for you to imagine than for me to express the feelings aroused in my breast by the thought that the honor thus paid me is shared by my old associates—the living and the dead; and you will permit me simply to say, that in this light I regard your action in placing me at the head of the Club with a deeper sensibility and a more profound gratitude.

But I should prove myself unworthy of the post were I to continue to hold it while unable to fulfil its duties.

When I accepted the office, I thought it possible that I might soon return. I now find that I shall be detained abroad until late in the autumn, and, therefore, with renewed thanks for your confidence and kindness, I respectfully submit to you my resignation.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours always faithfully,

JOHN JAY.

Hotel Westminster, Paris,
June 23, 1866.

LE Mr '12

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

0 013 785 664 5